

I. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1– 41. (Cancelled)

42. (Previously presented) A freeze control system for a spa, said freeze control system comprising:
- a) a temperature sensor suitable for obtaining a measurement of an ambient air temperature near the spa;
 - b) a spa controller in communication with said temperature sensor for receiving a signal conveying said measurement of the ambient air temperature near the spa, said spa controller being programmed for:
 - i) processing said signal to derive a rate of purge data element, said rate of purge data element being associated to a certain ambient air temperature;
 - ii) at least in part on the basis of the rate of purge data element, repetitively causing at least one pump of the spa to be activated for a certain time period and then deactivated, such as to repetitively cause the at least one pump of the spa to run for the certain time period.
43. (Previously presented) A freeze control system as defined in claim 42, wherein processing said signal to derive the rate of purge data element includes selecting a rate of purge data element from a set of possible rates of purge data elements, each rate of purge data element in the set of possible rates of purge data elements having a respective rate value.
44. (Previously presented) A freeze control system as defined in claim 42, wherein processing said signal to derive the rate of purge data element includes applying a

correction factor to said signal conveying said measurement of the ambient air temperature near the spa.

45. (Previously presented) A freeze control system as defined in claim 42, wherein said certain time period is a pre-determined time period.
46. (Withdrawn) A freeze control system as defined in claim 42, wherein said temperature sensor is positioned remotely from said spa controller.
47. (Withdrawn) A freeze control system as defined in claim 46, wherein said temperature sensor is positioned in proximity to piping associated to the spa.
48. (Previously presented) A freeze control system as defined in claim 42, wherein said temperature sensor is positioned inside said spa controller.
49. (Cancelled).
50. (Previously presented) A freeze control system as defined in claim 42, at least in part on the basis of the rate of purge data element, said spa controller is programmed for repetitively causing a water blower of the spa to be activated for a given time period and then deactivated, such as to repetitively cause the water blower of the spa to run for the given time period.
51. (Previously presented) A spa system having water freeze control capabilities, said spa system comprising:
 - a) a spa tub for holding water;
 - b) a water heater;
 - c) spa piping interconnecting said spa tub and said water heater, said spa piping including at least one pump for circulating water between said water heater and said spa tub;

- d) a temperature sensor suitable for obtaining a measurement of an ambient air temperature near said spa system;
 - e) a spa controller in communication with said temperature sensor for receiving a signal conveying said measurement of the ambient air temperature near said spa system, said spa controller being programmed for:
 - i) processing said signal conveying said measurement of the ambient air temperature near said spa system to derive a rate of purge data element, said rate of purge data element being associated to a certain ambient air temperature;
 - ii) at least in part on the basis of the rate of purge data element, repetitively causing the at least one pump of the spa to be activated for a certain time period and then deactivated, such as to repetitively cause the at least one pump of the spa to run for the certain time period.
52. (Previously presented) A spa system as defined in claim 51, wherein processing said signal to derive the rate of purge data element includes selecting a rate of purge data element from a set of possible rates of purge data elements, each rate of purge data element in the set of possible rates of purge data elements having a respective rate value.
53. (Previously presented) A spa system as defined in claim 51, wherein processing said signal to derive a rate of purge data element includes applying a correction factor to said signal conveying said measurement of the ambient air temperature near said spa system.
54. (Previously presented) A spa system as defined in claim 51, wherein said certain time period is a pre-determined time period.
55. (Withdrawn) A spa system as defined in claim 51, wherein said temperature sensor is positioned remotely from said spa controller.

56. (Withdrawn) A spa system as defined in claim 55, wherein said temperature sensor is positioned in proximity to the spa piping.
57. (Previously presented) A spa system as defined in claim 51, wherein said temperature sensor is positioned inside said spa controller.
58. (Cancelled)
59. (Previously presented) A spa system as defined in claim 51, at least in part on the basis of the rate of purge data element, said spa controller is programmed for repetitively causing the water blower of the spa to be activated for a given time period and then deactivated, such as to repetitively cause the water blower of the spa to run for the given time period.
- 60-66. (Cancelled)
67. (Previously presented) A freeze control system for a spa, said freeze control system comprising:
- a. a temperature sensor suitable for obtaining a measurement of an ambient air temperature near the spa;
 - b. a spa controller in communication with said temperature sensor for receiving a signal conveying said measurement of the ambient air temperature near the spa, said spa controller being programmed for repetitively causing at least one pump of the spa to be activated for a certain time period and then deactivated at a repetition rate conditioned at least in part on the basis of said measurement associated to an ambient air temperature near the spa.